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GOVERNOR

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Granholt, Takai Presented With Digital Government Award at NGA Meeting

Michigan Ranked First Among the States

SEATTLE – The State of Michigan was formally recognized during ceremonies at the National Governors' Association Summer Meeting as the number one state in the nation for using information technology to provide service delivery, cost saving and efficiency, collaboration, and leadership in all aspects of state government.

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and Teri Takai, Director of the Michigan Department of Information Technology (DIT) formally accepted the award from the Center for Digital Government, which has ranked Michigan as first in the nation in the use of information technology to transform and improve government in its 2004 Digital States Survey.

"By using information technology to make state government more accessible and cost effective we are positioning Michigan to be global economic powerhouse in the 21st century," said Governor Jennifer M. Granholm. "Information technology is playing a critical role in every aspect of our work. Whether it's helping us work with local governments and the private sector to improve efficiencies or helping us create jobs through economic development initiatives, information technology is at the heart of Michigan's state government."

Michigan climbed to the number one spot from a second place finish in the previous study conducted in 2002. The Center for Digital Government, in conjunction with Government Technology magazine and The Progress & Freedom Foundation, conducted the study which is considered the nation's most recognized and respected study of the use of information technology in the 50 states.

According to Cathelia Robinett, executive director of the Center for Digital Government, Michigan's first place finish reflects its performance in the areas of service delivery, cost saving and efficiency, collaboration, and leadership.

"Michigan has exhibited a tremendous amount of leadership and determination throughout the years," said Robinett. "They have made bold moves to advance Michigan as a leader in the global economy and have been devoted to providing the highest level of service to their citizens. I have tremendous respect for Governor Granholm's vision and State Chief Information Officer Teri Takai's dedication."

Takai was appointed Director of the Michigan Department of Information Technology (DIT) by Governor Granholm in February of 2003. The Governor's charge to Takai was to use technology to make Michigan the best place to live and work. Under Takai's direction, DIT has focused on providing more government services online so Michigan citizens and businesses find it easier to obtain services and do business with the state.

"This first place finish is great news for the State of Michigan," Takai said. "Information technology is a powerful tool for delivering services and has the potential to change the way government does business. This award recognizes how far Michigan has come in making that transformation a reality. I gratefully acknowledge the work of our employees and agency partners who made it possible."

It was the breadth and depth of Michigan's performance that distinguished it among other top states, according to Paul W. Taylor, Ph.D., a chief strategy officer at the Center. "Michigan changed the citizen and business experience through a broad suite of real-time transactional services, powered by an increasingly shared and robust infrastructure, designed around a coherent statewide architecture, and supported by a collaborative planning process," said Taylor.

The 2004 survey examines a whole new breed of technology as a tool for serving citizens and state governments' needs. It is the first to report on the transition of states to digital government since the 2002 elections and includes a greater focus on strategy, management, and results.

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